

# **A cleaner and more transparent governance of public goods is a necessary step towards stronger sustainable development.**

## **Intervention from the floor**

**at the APEC ACT task force meeting, Washington DC, on March 4<sup>th</sup>, 2011**

by Sandro Calvani, Director of ASEAN Centre of Excellence on Millennium Development Goals.<sup>1</sup>

Thank you very much for the opportunity of attending this task force meeting and this round table.

As scholars who study socio-economic development we analyze evidence of stalling economic transformation in various countries, in particular growing inequity and chronic poverty: we find evidence of the fact that corruption is the most intolerable cause of failures of economic and social progress, with development goals not being attained according to plans.

As a response to such convergent threats to human security, enhanced anti-corruption strategies should be a matter of top priority for all policy makers, and not only for law enforcement authorities. We therefore support very strongly a closer collaboration between APEC and ASEAN to maximize results in the reduction of corruption and of its devastating impact on development.

In order to obtain the collaboration of as many public and private partners as possible in this fight, our magazine “Freedom from Want” will soon publish a review by the ACT chair of anti-corruption policies including capacity building and other anti-corruption activities in our region. We particularly welcome the APEC Transpacific Symposium on Dismantling Transnational Illicit Networks scheduled in Phuket, Thailand, in October 2011 and wish to help to make it another successful collaborative endeavor.

Furthermore there are a few more innovative areas of collaboration which could be explored in the near future.

We should make every effort to strengthen good governance synergies between development efforts and anti-crime and anti-corruption activities. While we fully recognize that transnational crime and corruption stifle development we should admit at the same time that chronic poverty continues to fuel the will of millions of people to accept corruption as a short-cut to their immediate problems.

Great care should be given to fine-tune specific anti corruption policies in specific fields of development action. We should avoid “one size fits all” policies: for example we can collaborate in fine tuning corruption strategies in humanitarian operations, public work contracts for development infrastructure and in environmental affairs.

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<sup>1</sup> [www.arcmdg.ait.asia](http://www.arcmdg.ait.asia)

Collaboration could become closer in understanding different perception of corruption with reference to people diversity, cultural environment, social systems and ethical values. In this regard the ASEAN regional fora can provide a useful framework of policy planning and consultation.

Since I am not informed of the full spectrum of ASEAN anti corruption activities I will ask to the ASEAN Secretariat to inform APEC of all ongoing and planned activities (as Thailand has requested yesterday).

In conclusion, let me add a personal consideration. After having spent thirty years of my professional life as an international civil servant in territories of humanitarian crisis, conflicts and high intensity criminality and corruption, I wish to express my belief that preparedness and prevention work well in the fight against the dark side of globalization as much as law enforcement and prosecution after crime.

The private sector, the media, the NGOs, including value and faith based organizations can contribute the good will of millions of people to end the corruption scourge for the next generation. Most economies which score a high resilience to corruption have in fact attained their results by boosting a strong anti-corruption culture and every day's attitude by all citizens and by all institutions.

In this regard ASEAN policy making bodies can facilitate a higher participation to anti-corruption goals also by officials and institutions who deal with economic and social development.

Once again, I am glad to see the collaboration between APEC and ASEAN being strengthened because more collaboration leads to more opportunities of success. I wish to commit my Centre to facilitate such cooperation, and I sincerely hope that such alliance will continue to grow stronger. Thank you.